

In the United States Court of Federal Claims
OFFICE OF SPECIAL MASTERS
No. 21-0699V

KRISTINE LAW,

Petitioner,

v.

SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES,

Respondent.

Chief Special Master Corcoran

Filed: November 2, 2023

Leigh Finfer, Muller Brazil, LLP, Dresher, PA, for Petitioner.

Andrew Henning, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, DC, for Respondent.

DECISION ON ATTORNEY'S FEES AND COSTS¹

On January 12, 2021, Kristine Law filed a petition for compensation under the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program, 42 U.S.C. §300aa-10, *et seq.*² (the "Vaccine Act"). Petitioner alleged that she suffered a left shoulder injury related to vaccine administration a defined Table Injury, after receiving the influenza vaccine on September

¹ Because this Decision contains a reasoned explanation for the action taken in this case, it must be made publicly accessible and will be posted on the United States Court of Federal Claims' website, and/or at <https://www.govinfo.gov/app/collection/uscourts/national/cofc>, in accordance with the E-Government Act of 2002. 44 U.S.C. § 3501 note (2018) (Federal Management and Promotion of Electronic Government Services). **This means the Decision will be available to anyone with access to the internet.** In accordance with Vaccine Rule 18(b), Petitioner has 14 days to identify and move to redact medical or other information, the disclosure of which would constitute an unwarranted invasion of privacy. If, upon review, I agree that the identified material fits within this definition, I will redact such material from public access.

² National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act of 1986, Pub. L. No. 99-660, 100 Stat. 3755. Hereinafter, for ease of citation, all section references to the Vaccine Act will be to the pertinent subparagraph of 42 U.S.C. § 300aa (2018).

20, 2020.³ Petition at 1, ¶ 1. On June 30, 2023, I issued a decision awarding compensation to Petitioner, based on the Respondent's proffer. ECF No. 40.

Petitioner has now filed a motion for attorney's fees and costs, requesting an award of \$17,861.02 (representing \$17,168.50 for fees and \$692.52 for costs). Petitioner's Application for Fees and Costs filed Oct. 13, 2023, ECF No. 45. In accordance with General Order No. 9, counsel for Petitioner represents that Petitioner incurred no out-of-pocket expenses. *Id.* at ¶ 4.

Respondent reacted to the motion on October 13, 2023, reporting that he is satisfied that the statutory requirements for an award of attorney's fees and costs are met in this case, but deferring resolution of the amount to be awarded to my discretion. Respondent's Response to Motion at 2-3, 3 n.2, ECF No. 46. On October 16, 2023, Petitioner's counsel notified the paralegal assisting me on SPU attorney's fees and costs that Petitioner did not intend to file a reply. See Informal Remark, dated Oct. 16, 2023.

I have reviewed the billing records submitted with Petitioner's request. In my experience, the request appears reasonable, and I find no cause to reduce the requested hours or rates.

I note this case required additional briefing regarding the factual issue of severity. See Petitioner's Motion for a Factual Ruling, filed Aug. 16, 2022, ECF No. 23. Petitioner's counsel expended approximately 13.2 hours drafting the motion. ECF No. 45 at 11-12. I find this amount of time to be reasonable. All time billed to the matter was also reasonably incurred.

Furthermore, Petitioner has provided supporting documentation for all claimed costs. ECF No. 45 at 16-25. And Respondent offered no specific objection to the rates or amounts sought. I have reviewed the requested costs and find them to be reasonable.

CONCLUSION

The Vaccine Act permits an award of reasonable attorney's fees and costs for successful claimants. Section 15(e). I award a total of **\$17,861.02 (representing \$17,168.50 for fees and \$692.52 in costs) as a lump sum in the form of a check jointly payable to Petitioner and Petitioner's counsel, Leigh Finfer.** In the absence

³ Petitioner also filed an amended petition with additional detail and medical records citations on March 14, 2022. ECF No. 17.

of a timely-filed motion for review (see Appendix B to the Rules of the Court), the Clerk of Court shall enter judgment in accordance with this decision.⁴

IT IS SO ORDERED.

s/Brian H. Corcoran

Brian H. Corcoran

Chief Special Master

⁴ Pursuant to Vaccine Rule 11(a), the parties may expedite entry of judgment by filing a joint notice renouncing their right to seek review.